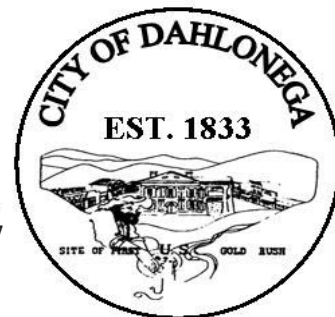


City Limits

News from the Government Offices of Dahlonega, Georgia

Vol.3, No. 3

July 2007



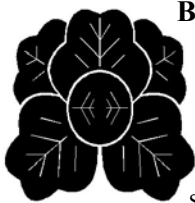
This newsletter is a collaborative project of the city of Dahlonega and Lumpkin County, designed to help citizens stay informed. Editor: Lee Ann Roy, Independent Writer

City to Make Old Funeral Home Home

Dahlonega city officials have found a way to embrace the past and the future at the same time. The city that preaches historic preservation is “walking the walk” with the recent purchase of the historic structure at 208 N. Grove St. The beautiful home until recently served as McKinney Funeral Home and was occupied by Vickers-Sisk Funeral Home for years before that. The mortuaries will be torn down, and the home will be fully restored to its original residential condition. Ultimately, it will replace the current Riley Road facility as the new City Hall.

The small but pleasantly surprised group of citizens at the June City Council meeting applauded enthusiastically when the announcement was made by Mayor Gary McCullough, who described an opportunity the city just couldn't pass up. The property was in foreclosure, and the city was able to pick up the home and its two and a half acres for \$427,000. Phase I and II environmental studies already have been conducted with satisfactory results. Mayor McCullough says remodeling plans will be shared with the public when they become available.

The home was built more than a



Better Fruits, Veggies for Little Cabbage

The best quality, good selection and low prices...you'll find all three at the Dahlonega Farmers Market this summer. The market is held Tuesdays and Saturdays in Hancock Park just off the Public Square from around 7am until 3pm, or until the goods are gone. All the fruits, vegetables, and culinary herbs are locally grown and fresh-picked from the garden with pride and care by the farmers who sell them at the park. WIC farmers market (FMNP) coupons are accepted for approved foods. Shoppers will also find delicious jams, jellies, honey, dried flowers, plants and garden seeds. The Downtown Dahlonega Farmers Market is sponsored by the City of Dahlonega's Better Hometown Program. Contact Joel Cordle, 706-864-6133, for details. And remember: Eat your vegetables!



hundred years ago by an official with Consolidated Mining Co., and was known at different times in history as The Home Place and Hillcrest. It has been home to many prominent Dahlonega residents, including W.A. Charters, who served on the first board of trustees of the community's public school and was the son-in-law of North Georgia College founder and former president Col. W.P. Price.

City officials had put a Band-aid® on the current, cramped City Hall building recently with the workable, but short-term, solution of reworking the floor plan and attaching a modular building. The goal was to limp the building along for five years or so until the city could afford to build a new one from the ground up. With precious little land left downtown for a new city hall building, the city last fall had purchased Lumpkin County's old elementary school just north of the Public Square with that in mind. Now, Mayor McCullough says, the city likely will sell that property when it can. In the meantime, it's being leased to North Georgia College & State University while renovations are in progress on its campus.

Come Out 'n Play (Or Listen)

Ever since people started gathering in Dahlonega, there's been music. Thanks to the Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority, the city's Better Hometown Program and grants and support from many other folks and organizations, that tradition lives on. Pickers and singers from all over North Georgia gather at the



Dahlonega Gold Museum State Historic Site Saturday afternoons to share the acoustic bluegrass and old time string music heard in the Appalachian Mountains for generations. Scheduled musicians keep things moving; other musicians are welcomed to bring their acoustic instruments and join in for some lively jam sessions. Appalachian Jams are on Saturdays from 2-6pm through October. For details call 706-864-3513

City Holds Breath on \$5 Million Water Bill

No one's making out the deposit slip yet, but up to \$5 million in funding for Dahlonega's water treatment plant and distribution system has been authorized in a bill approved by the U.S. Senate under the Water Resources Development Act. The city has been working, through its recently hired lobbyist, with U.S. Rep. Nathan Deal, Senators Saxby Chambliss and Johnny Isakson and others and has succeeded in getting Dahlonega on the Senate's list of 11 critical Georgia water infrastructure projects being considered for \$80 million of funding. Here's the rub: The U.S. House has passed its own version of the legislation, and Dahlonega is not on *that* list.

Both bills have been pushed along to the next step—debate in a conference committee to hammer out the differences and arrive at a compromise. The legislation's next stop will be the House Appropriations Committee, where more weeding out of projects and/or funds could occur. The water resources funding would come out of the 2008 federal budget. It will most likely be toward the end of this year before city officials will learn whether Dahlonega will actually receive any of that federal funding for its water project and, if so, how much. But even though there's no guarantee Dahlonega will see any of this money, city manager Bill Lewis says just getting on the 'short list' of projects shows the city is making headway toward getting a bigger slice of the federal funding pie.



City to Slow Down on Paving

Dahlonega was very aggressive in its road paving program for the past three years, and it's a good thing, since paving costs about twice as much today as it did a few years ago. During that time, city roads have enjoyed about a half million dollars worth of resurfacing—more than half of that from city dollars and the remainder in matching funds from the DOT. Many of the city's roads are in good shape now, and while the city won't completely put the brakes on its paving program, city manager Bill Lewis says he does expect to slow down the pace a bit now.



City of Dahlonega . . . continued from reverse side



Take the (State) Highway

City officials have long wished for a way to better control speeding and signage issues on and around the state roadways that feed into Dahlonega's Public Square. In a recent meeting with the Georgia Department of Transportation to address those issues, a solution was proposed that was almost brilliant in its simplicity. A DOT staff member suggested the city consider assuming ownership of the roads. The city now has received word that a DOT committee has approved the agency's transferring ownership of these roads and rights of way: the stretch of S. Chestatee Street from Morrison Moore Parkway (at the Madeleine Anthony gateway park) to the Public Square and East/West Main Street from Morrison Moore Parkway (at Mt. Hope Cemetery) to the traffic light at East Main and Grove Street. If the city acquired the roads, it could clean up the sign clutter, make the area safer for pedestrians, better control truck traffic, add loading zones and make its own decisions about closing the square for festivals. The plan raises a few concerns, like road maintenance costs and conditions of the roads at the time of transfer and the city's lack of traffic engineering staff to deal with the two traffic lights that would come with the deal. The city will discuss those concerns with the DOT before council decides whether to take that road.

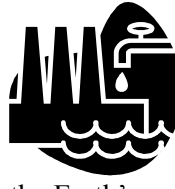
And the Golden Nail Goes to . . .

Dahlonega Mayor Gary McCullough presented the city's Golden Nail Award to Freddy and Shirley Welch at the May City Council Meeting. The award was in recognition of the first phase of an expansion and renovation project at The Smith House, a Dahlonega icon that attracts many visitors to town. When the two phase project is finished, it will feature expansion of the restaurant and hotel, increasing the property by 52 guest rooms and adding meeting facilities for 200 guests.



Waterworks:

Geotechnical work—investigation of the soil, rock and other elements below the ground at the site of the city's new water treatment plant—has been done, and engineers at JJ&G engineering firm are reviewing the results of field and laboratory testing. What they learn about the Earth's properties there will help them make decisions about the design and construction of the facility's foundation. Meanwhile, design work on the water plant and delivery system continues to flow right along, with design engineers estimating they're around a third of the way through that phase of the project.



Doing a Good Turn for Intern

The city has been providing a great opportunity for a North Georgia College & State University graduate student this summer. In turn, master of public administration program student Ryan Arnold has helped move along some important city projects. A



win-win eight-week internship program has involved Ryan in the downtown master plan process—he's been reviewing requirements for qualified consultants—in a transportation enhancement grant the city has applied for and in researching other grant opportunities. Ryan earned his bachelor's degree from Seattle University, served in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps and taught middle school before enrolling in NGCSU's MPA program, which stresses management and people skills in its core curriculum.



Marisa Pierce Takes the Prize

Customer service. That's what

it's all about for municipal court clerk Marisa Pierce, selected as 2006 Employee of the Year by the City of Dahlonega and recognized for her service recently at the Rotary Club of Dahlonega's Vocational Service Award ceremony. Employed by the city for seven years, Marisa handles the administration of city court from start to finish, which includes coordinating with the Lumpkin County Sheriff's Office, reporting to local and state officials, scheduling with attorneys and the judge and notifying individuals of arraignment and trial dates, among other activities. When she first took on the duties of court clerk six years ago, that was just one of several hats she wore. Now the position is a full-time job in itself, handling some 75 arraignments and 10 trials a month—mainly for traffic and alcohol related crimes. Marisa still gets to help customers with their utility bill payments sometimes, though, a treat, she says, because she enjoys talking to people. "Marisa does a great job," says city manager Bill Lewis, adding, "She's cheerful and always looking around to see how else she can help with whatever needs to be done." The Rotary Club awarded Marisa a certificate and \$100.

How May We Be of Service?



Question? Comment? Problem? Call City Hall at (706) 864-6133. We'll put you in touch with the right person.

City Council

Gary McCullough, Mayor
Michael Clemons
Guy Laboa
Gerald Lord
Sam Norton
Terry Peters
Bill Scott

Bill Lewis, City Manager

Please join us at our meetings!

Learn about your government by attending public meetings like these. Find the complete schedule at www.cityofdahlonega.com.

City Council: 1st Monday of each month at 6pm—City Hall

Planning/Zoning Commission: 2nd Monday of each month at 7pm—City Hall

Historic Preservation Commission: 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6pm—City Hall

Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority: 3rd Thursday of each month at 9am--City Hall

City of Dahlonega
A Better Hometown/
Main Street Community
465 Riley Rd.
Dahlonega, Georgia 30533
Phone 706-864-6133
Fax 706-864-4837
e-mail:
cityofdahlonega@alltel.net
www.cityofdahlonega.com